

Appl. No. : 10/803,267
Filed : March 18, 2004

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and the following remarks are responsive to the March 29, 2007 Final Office Action. Claims 1-21 remain pending in the present application, Claims 7, 8, and 16, having been amended. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the above-captioned application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments.

Comments on Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the allowability of Claims 1-6, 9-15, and 19-21. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the allowability of the remaining pending claims in view of the amendments and remarks herein.

All Pending Claims Fully Comply With 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 first paragraph, the Examiner maintaining that the claims fail to comply with the written description requirement.

Applicants have amended Claims 7 and 8 and submit that the amended claims fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 first paragraph. Support for amended Claims 7 and 8 is provided by the specification as originally filed, including but not limited to, paragraph [0168]. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 7 and 8 and pass these claims to allowance.

Claims 16-18 Are Directed to Patentable Subject Matter Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants respectfully traverse the present rejection. However, to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicants have amended Claim 16. Applicants also expressly reserve the right to further prosecute the original versions of Claims 16-18 through continuation practice.

Applicants have amended Claim 16 to recite (emphasis added):

16. A method of detecting an embedded object within a laser-irradiated interaction region of a structure comprising the embedded object, the method comprising:

- drilling a hole in the structure, thereby exposing the embedded object within the interaction region;
- collecting light from the interaction region during drilling;
- separating the collected light into a spectrum of wavelengths;
- analyzing at least a portion of the spectrum for indications of the exposed embedded object within the interaction region; and

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**selectively adjusting the drilling in response to the indications,
thereby avoiding substantially damaging the reinforcing member.**

Support for amended Claim 16 is provided by the specification as originally filed, including but not limited to, paragraph [0165].

Applicants submit that amended Claim 16 recites, "selectively adjusting the drilling in response to the indications," which is, together with other recitations of Claim 16, a physical transformation and/or a useful, concrete, and tangible result. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claim 16 and pass this claim to allowance.

Additionally, Applicants submit that Claims 17 and 18 also are directed to patentable subject matter, not only because they depend from Claim 16, but also on their own merit. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 17 and 18 and pass these claims to allowance.

SUMMARY

For the reasons described above, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection of the claims and pass Claims 1-21 to allowance.

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections and objections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve such issue promptly.

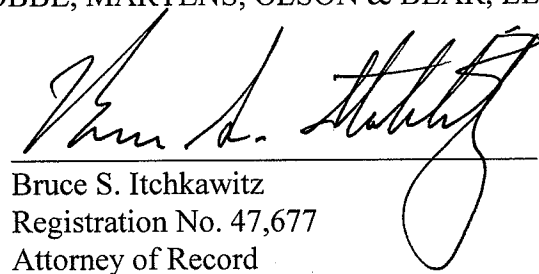
Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 5/29/07

By:


Bruce S. Itchkawitz
Registration No. 47,677
Attorney of Record
2040 Main Street

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Fourteenth Floor
Irvine, CA 92614
Customer No. 20,995
(949) 760-0404

3617359: clk